

Agrometeorological forecast for February

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During the first ten-day period of February, agrometeorological conditions will be determined by above-normal temperatures and in many places in the lowland areas their average daily values will reach the biological minimum required for the resumption of vegetative processes in winter cereal crops.

At the end of the first and the beginning of the second ten-day period, a decrease in temperatures is expected, which will prevent premature vegetation in autumn-sown crops and in some early-flowering stone fruit species in the lowland regions of the country. During the second ten-day period, the forecast average daily temperatures will be close to the climatic norms and will maintain the overwintering agricultural crops in dormancy.

During the third ten-day period, agrometeorological conditions will again be determined by above-normal temperatures, which will disturb the relative dormancy of autumn-sown crops and the forced dormancy of some early-flowering fruit crops. At the end of February, in winter cereal crops in places in Southern Bulgaria and along the Black Sea coast, conditions will be created for delayed vegetation, but a significant change in the phenological status of the crops is not expected. In wheat, the third leaf and tillering growth stages will be observed. In the extreme southern and southeastern regions, in some early-flowering stone fruit species (almond, peach, cherry), bud swelling and in some places the beginning of bud burst will occur.

In February, the forecast values of the minimum temperatures, down to minus 12-13°C, in conditions without snow cover and with a more prolonged duration, will pose a risk to late-sown winter cereal crops that have stopped vegetation at the 2-3 leaf stage, and to rape crops that failed to form a rosette during their autumn vegetation.

The expected precipitation during the month, around and above the norm, will increase the moisture reserves in the two-metre soil layer. As a result of the above-normal January precipitation, which in many places in the country exceeded 140-150 l/m² (Vratsa -146 l/m², Shumen -147 l/m², Varna -154 l/m², Dragoman -158 l/m², Blagoevgrad -145 l/m², Sandanski -151 l/m², Haskovo -146 l/m², Kardzhali -176 l/m², Elhovo -163 l/m², Burgas -185 l/m²), the soil moisture reserves in the one-metre layer in winter cereal crops reached levels close to field capacity (FC).

During the first and second ten-day periods of February, the high moisture content in the upper soil layers will limit the possibilities for carrying out some agrotechnical activities – top dressing of autumn-sown crops with nitrogen mineral fertilizers, pre-sowing tillage of areas intended for sowing with early spring crops (pea, vetch, oats, spring barley). More suitable conditions for pruning in vineyards and orchards, and for winter plant protection spraying in orchards, will be available on most days of the first and third ten-day periods of February.

Source: NIMH